

ADEPT: Parliamentary monitoring November 2020

This document is tailored to provide a monthly overview of key activity, debates, questions, reports, PMQs, speeches and bills relevant to the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport.

Key dates

20 December: Christmas recess

31 December: Brexit extension period ends

07 January: House returns

Devolution deals

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 30/10/20 | Press Release | Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority | <p>New skills powers for South Yorkshire will show the power of devolution in action</p> <p>Plans to utilise new skills powers in South Yorkshire are being developed by the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority, as the region continues to support residents, employers and businesses during the Coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>As part of its Devolution Deal, the Sheffield City Region Mayoral Combined Authority will take responsibility for c£36m of devolved Adult Education Budget (AEB) from August 1st, 2021 and will commission adult skills provision for the residents of Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield. More here...</p> |
| 16/11/20 | Press release | Localis | <p>Double down on devolution to create powerful communities, Localis report urges</p> <p>Ministers must make full use of the forthcoming Local Recovery and Devolution White Paper to give communities the power and resources they need to build back a better society, a report by the think-tank Localis has advised.</p> <p>In a study issued today entitled 'Renewing Neighbourhood Democracy – Creating Powerful Communities' the think-tank calls on central government to facilitate a clear pathway for communities to take control over local services, assets and social infrastructure.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |

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| 20/11/20 | Press release | Make UK | <p>Regional devolution critical to refocus priorities towards local infrastructure projects and rebalance UK – Make UK/RSM analysis</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
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Digital – Broadband & mobile

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| | | | No updates |

Economic recovery & renewal

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 29/10/20 | Press Release | Aviva | <p>Interest in ESG investing boosted by Covid One of the side-effects of the Covid-19 crisis has been an increased interest in ESG investing by UK investors, a recent Aviva survey reveals. ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance – is now the commonly-used term to describe the three main factors in measuring the sustainability and societal impact of a company or business. Other terms that might be used include ethical, sustainable, responsible, green and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) amongst others. More here...</p> |
| 30/10/20 | Oral answers | HoL | <p>Covid-19: Small Businesses - Hansard</p> <p>Answered on: Thursday 29 October 2020 Lord Cotter: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support small businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>Lord Callanan (The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy): My Lords, the Government have introduced an unprecedented and comprehensive package of financial support, with a total fiscal response of close to £200 billion. The measures introduced, including government-backed loan guarantee schemes, grant funding and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme have been designed to be accessible to most businesses and sectors across the UK. We continue to keep this support under review, with further measures announced by the Chancellor that build on the significant support already available.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Lord Cotter (LD): Coming from a small business background as I do, I thank the Minister for the Answer. I shall quote my local paper's warning from local stores: "Use us or lose us". Business rates are a real burden these days, as before. May I urge the Minister to look at these issues with renewed emphasis?</p> <p>Read more here...</p> |
| 2/11/20 | Press Release | FSB | <p>Second wave restrictions require a second wave of support for small businesses</p> <p>Second wave restrictions require a second wave of support for small businesses</p> <p>Responding to the Prime Minister's announcement of significant new COVID-19 restrictions in England, National Chairman of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) Mike Cherry said: " Small businesses have followed the guidance, protected the health of their staff and customers, and invested in making their business COVID-safe.</p> <p>Read more here.</p> |
| 2/11/20 | Written Q&A | Treasury | <p>Non-domestic Rates: Coronavirus UIN 107644</p> <p>Stephen McPartland (Stevenage): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to extend the business rates holiday to the 2021-22 financial year for sectors affected by the covid-19 outbreak. [107644]</p> <p>Jesse Norman (Hereford and South Herefordshire): The Government will continue to look at how to adjust its support in a way that ensures people can get back to work, protecting both the UK economy and the livelihoods of people across the country. The Government considers all reliefs in the round, against the broader fiscal and economic impacts of COVID-19, as part of the Business Rates Review.</p> |
| 4/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>Lockdown: Economic Support</p> <p>Anneliese Dodds (Oxford East) (Lab/Co-op) (Urgent Question): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on economic support available to individuals and businesses during and after the recently announced lockdown.</p> <p>Full details here...</p> |

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| 4/11/20 | Press release | BEIS | <p>£134 million boost to help UK businesses build back greener</p> <p>Businesses across the UK are set to benefit from £134 million investment, enabling ground-breaking clean growth projects develop new technologies and secure new jobs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £134 million government investment to keep UK's greenest, most innovative businesses thriving during coronavirus pandemic and could help to secure and create new jobs across the country • projects to service offshore wind turbines autonomously, using AI to reduce beer waste in the brewing process and converting seaweed into compostable packaging to tackle plastic waste set to benefit • investment part of the government's commitment to build back better by supporting the UK's risk takers to bring their novel ideas to market <p>Full details here...</p> |
| 4/11/20 | Written Q&A | Treasury | <p>Food: Wholesale Trade HM Treasury UIN 109588</p> <p>Emma Hardy (Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what plans he has to extend Business Rates Relief to food and drink wholesalers in Tier 3 local covid-19 alert level areas. [109588]</p> <p>Jesse Norman (Hereford and South Herefordshire): The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has published guidance for local authorities on eligible properties. As set out in the guidance, support is targeted at premises that are wholly or mainly being used as shops, restaurants, cafes, drinking establishments, cinemas and live music venues; for assembly and leisure; or as hotels, guest and boarding premises and self-catering accommodation. It is for local authorities to determine eligibility for reliefs, having regard to guidance issued by the Government.</p> <p>Local authorities which were subject to restrictions on indoor socialising between 1 August and 5 November will receive funding to allow them to make backdated grants to businesses which were able to remain open during that period, but were experiencing a severe reduction in</p> |

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| | | | <p>demand due to these restrictions. Local authorities across England will also receive a total of £1.1bn to provide further business grants and other forms of business support to companies in their areas.</p> |
| 4/11/20 | Written Q&A | Treasury | <p>Non-domestic Rates: Coronavirus UIN 109364</p> <p>To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will extend the business rates holiday to the 2021-22 financial year.</p> <p>The Government will continue to look at how to adjust support in a way that ensures people can get back to work, protecting both the UK economy and the livelihoods of people across the country. The Government will consider all reliefs in the round, against the broader fiscal and economic impacts of COVID-19, as part of the Business Rates Review.</p> |
| 5/11//20 | Oral answers | HoL | <p>Covid-19 Lockdown: Economic Support – Hansard Volume 807</p> <p>Lord Tunnicliffe (Lab): Lord Agnew Of Oulton (The Minister of State, Cabinet Office and the Treasury): My Lords, we are very aware of the pressure on self-employed people at the moment, and it is important to remind the House of the level of support that we have given. Up to 19 July, there were 2.7 million claims for SEISS, totalling £7.8 billion. On the second grant, up to 22 October, we had 2.3 million claims of up to £5.9 billion. We keep under review the whole issue of trying to protect those who have fallen through the cracks. As the noble Lord will know, in relation to the universal credit system, yesterday we announced that the removal of the minimum income floor has been put back until April, which will help. In relation to his very specific questions about linking the isolation payments to NHS Test and Trace, I will have to write to him, which I will do as soon as possible.</p> <p>Baroness Kramer (LD): My Lords, the Minister did not answer the question on the 3 million people excluded, who are largely self-employed and just seemed too complicated to deal with last spring but surely could be provided for now? Will he specifically address that? Businesses are under extreme pressure: they are being asked to cope with constant stopping,</p> |

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| | | | <p>starting and change in support schemes. Will the Minister now commit to extend 80% furlough and related schemes until the end of June, when we expect a vaccine, so that any business that will be viable, if it can survive the pandemic, can cope with the short-term constraints and closures?</p> <p>Read full answer here.</p> |
| 06/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme</p> <p>That this House believes the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme is not adequately fulfilling its role for SMEs across the UK; and urges Government intervention to ensure that all businesses are provided with the financial support they need.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 06/11/20 | Oral Answer | DCMS | <p>Tourism Sector: Covid-19 Support Volume 683</p> <p>Andrew Jones (Harrogate and Knaresborough) (Con)</p> <p>What steps his Department is taking to support the tourism sector during the covid-19 outbreak. [908249]</p> <p>Selaine Saxby (North Devon) (Con)</p> <p>What steps his Department is taking to support the tourism sector during the covid-19 outbreak. [908254]</p> <p>Covid-19 has had a severe impact on tourism, which is why we have provided a range of targeted measures to see the sector through this period. On top of the Government's wider economic support package, we have provided business rates relief and grants for many in the sector, as well as a cut in VAT for tourism and hospitality activities until the end of March. We are continuing to engage with stakeholders to assess how we can most effectively support tourism's recovery across the UK.</p> <p>Andrew Jones</p> <p>Harrogate and Knaresborough is in the top 10% of UK constituencies for hospitality employment. That includes a significant number of teams at B&Bs and guest houses, which are suffering from a lack of international visitors and the closure of the exhibition sector. There is a market that could be developed further to help, and that is domestic tourism. As we emerge from the pandemic and lockdown finishes, what will the Government do to promote domestic tourism?</p> |

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| | | | <p>Nigel Huddleston I know my hon. Friend's passion for tourism and representing his fantastic constituency. As he knows, we currently need people to stay at home to reduce transmission and to ease the pressure on our NHS, but when holidays are permitted again, we will work with VisitBritain, VisitEngland and local partners, including destination management organisations, to champion the UK's diverse tourism offer, as we did with the Enjoy Summer Safely and Escape the Everyday campaigns. We will continue to work with the industry to provide guidance and assurance about when people can safely go on holiday, as demonstrated through initiatives such as the "We're good to go" industry standard mark.</p> <p>Selaine Saxby [V] With the announcement of new restrictions until 2 December, will the Minister outline the support that will be available to my North Devon tourism and hospitality businesses that are understandably worried about the months ahead?</p> <p>Nigel Huddleston I appreciate that my hon. Friend is a great advocate for tourism, particularly in her constituency. I am fully aware of how tough the new measures will be for the tourism sector, with businesses having already faced many months of reduced trade. There are significant packages of financial support in place, as the furlough scheme and self-employed support have been extended for the period of lockdown. Many businesses in the hospitality and tourism sector will also receive grants worth up to £3,000 per month under the local restrictions support grant scheme. An additional £1.1 billion is being given to local authorities to help businesses more broadly, such as those severely impacted by restrictions but not actually forced to close.</p> |
| 6/11/20 | Written Q&A | Treasury | <p>Holiday Accommodation: Coronavirus Answered on: Friday 6 November 2020 HM Treasury UIN 108288</p> <p>Emma Hardy (Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will allocate additional financial support to (a) hostels and (b) other group accommodation providers to</p> |

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| | | | <p>ensure that they have adequate funding until the 2021 tourist season. [108288]</p> <p>Kemi Badenoch (Saffron Walden): The Government recognises the extreme disruption the necessary actions to combat Covid-19 are having on hostels and other accommodation providers.</p> <p>During this difficult time the Treasury is working intensively with employers, delivery partners, industry groups and other government departments such as the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport to understand the long-term effects of Covid-19 on the accommodation sector. Some of the sector has already benefitted from the wide range of support, launched by the Government, to safeguard the economy during the pandemic. This includes a temporary reduction on VAT for tourism and hospitality from 20% to 5% until the end of March, and the deferral of VAT payments; a year-long business rates holiday for eligible businesses; grant schemes including the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grant and the Local Authority Discretionary Grant; the Self Employed Income Support Scheme, and the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme. We have also provided local authorities with £1.1bn to enable them to support businesses over the coming months, as they form a key part of local economies.</p> <p>In response to the England -wide restrictions announced by the Prime Minister on the 31 October, we have announced a new set of national support measures. This includes an extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme to March 2021, more generous support for the self-employed, extended application windows for government-backed loans and cash grants of up to £3,000 for businesses forced to close.</p> <p>While we will not be able to protect every single job or save every single business, nor stand in the way of the economy adapting and people finding new jobs or starting new businesses, we will continue to monitor the impact of Government support with regard to supporting businesses, individuals, and sectors such as accommodation as we respond to this pandemic.</p> |
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| 9/11/20 | Oral evidence | BEIS | <p>Oral evidence: Post-pandemic economic growth: Levelling up – local and regional structures and the delivery of economic growth, HC 675</p> <p>...Today we are going to split the session into an opening question on the impact of Covid on your regional economies and the functioning of the combined authorities, and then dive into some of the detail about how it has been going since you have been elected and what lessons might need to be learned for delivering the levelling-up agenda and the industrial strategy in the years to come...</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 10/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>Live Events and Weddings: Covid-19 Support</p> <p>That this House has considered e-petitions 329339 and 332789, relating to support for live events and weddings during covid-19.</p> <p>E-petition 329339 relates to the number of guests permitted at weddings during the coronavirus pandemic, and e-petition 332789 relates to support for nightclubs, festivals and the live events industry. It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Mr Gray, and I thank all right hon. and hon. Members who are in Westminster Hall for this Petitions Committee debate this afternoon.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 11/11/20 | Debate summary | HoC | <p>Support for SMEs: Covid-19 (Vol 683)</p> <p>Elliot Colburn (Carshalton and Wallington) (Con)</p> <p>I beg to move,</p> <p>That this House has considered support for SMEs during the covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>It is a pleasure to serve under your chairmanship, Sir Edward. At the request of the Petitions Committee, I would like to mention e-petition 305024, entitled “Extend grants immediately to small businesses outside of SBRR”, and e-petition 307959, entitled “Business Rate Relief to be extended to all small businesses in healthcare”.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Small and medium-sized enterprises account for the overwhelming majority of businesses in the UK. In Carshalton and Wallington, for example, nearly 90% of businesses are microbusinesses, having only zero to nine employees, and SMEs make up 99.8% of all businesses in my constituency. According to the Federation of Small Businesses, at the start of 2020 there were 5.94 million small businesses with zero to 49 employees, making up 99.9% of the business population overall. They account for three fifths of employment, employing 16.8 million people and with an annual turnover of £2.3 trillion, which is 52% of the annual turnover of the UK private sector. SMEs are the lifeblood of our local communities and are at the very heart of those communities. Not only are our local retailers loved by the communities we represent, and not only do they provide jobs for local people, but they are active and engaging members of our local communities. Full details here.</p> |
| 12/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>North of England: Economic Support Volume 683</p> <p>Dan Jarvis (Barnsley Central) (Lab)</p> <p>I beg to move,</p> <p>That this House has considered support for the economy in the north of England.</p> <p>It is a great pleasure to serve under your chairship, Mr Efford. I declare an interest as a metro Mayor.</p> <p>Today's debate takes place amid an unprecedented economic crisis affecting the whole country, but covid has only reinforced an argument that was already undeniable. We need to level up the north—not by tinkering at the margins, but through a full-scale transformation; not just for the sake of the north, but for the sake of the whole country. The question is, of course, whether the Government will make it happen.</p> <p>Covid has hit the north hard. We have a disproportionate number of cases and hospitalisations, and the pandemic has affected deprived areas more—and the north still has far too many deprived areas. Our economy has been equally exposed.</p> |

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| | | | <p>In South Yorkshire, the level of people claiming unemployment-related benefits is now higher than at any time since the mid-1990s, when we were in the aftermath of the pit closures. We risk undoing a quarter of a century of painful progress. The brutal reality is that the north is now on course for levelling down, not levelling up.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 13/11/20 | Oral answer | Cabinet office | <p>Covid-19: Local Discussions Volume 683</p> <p>Julian Sturdy (Con) (York Outer): What recent discussions the Government have had with local leaders on tackling the covid-19 outbreak. [908664]</p> <p>Damian Hinds (Con) (East Hampshire): What recent discussions the Government have had with local leaders on tackling the covid-19 outbreak. [908670]</p> <p>Darren Henry (Con) (Broxtowe): What recent discussions the Government have had with local leaders on tackling the covid-19 outbreak. [908686]</p> <p>The Paymaster General (Penny Mordaunt): At every stage of the pandemic, the UK Government have engaged with the devolved Administrations, metro mayors and local councils. Local resilience forums are at the frontline of providing the response to tackling covid-19, and the Government will continue to engage with local authorities to beat the virus.</p> <p>Julian Sturdy [V]: With covid cases in York now well below the level they were when the city went into tier 2, can the Minister reassure me that the Government are listening closely to the feedback and case numbers they are receiving from the city authorities, and that York 's restrictions from 2 December will be based on the local virus situation and local judgments, not based on decisions imposed by central Government or on wider regional figures?</p> <p>Full answer here.</p> |

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| 13/11/20 | Oral answer | Cabinet office | <p>Regional Equality of Economic Opportunity Vol 683</p> <p>Steve Double (Con) (St Austell and Newquay): What progress the Government have made on ensuring regional equality of economic opportunity. [908667]</p> <p>Amanda Milling (The Minister without Portfolio): The Government are doubling down on levelling up opportunity across the United Kingdom, ensuring that everyone benefits from economic growth. That includes longer-term measures such as £1 billion for local projects to boost local economic growth, alongside unprecedented support for businesses, workers and local authorities in every nation and region of the United Kingdom in the light of covid-19.</p> <p>Steve Double: Cornwall has been in receipt of funding through the European regional development fund for many years. I am delighted that the Government have committed to continue to support the Cornish economy at a similar level through the UK shared prosperity fund, which will be vital for continuing to level up our country. With the current ERDF programme coming to an end shortly, it is vital that the replacement fund is put in place as soon as possible. Can the Minister update the House on when we can expect the Government to come forward with details of the shared prosperity fund? (...)</p> <p>Full answer here.</p> |
| 13/11/20 | Oral answer | Cabinet office | <p>Covid-19: UK-wide Response</p> <p>Dr Luke Evans (Con) (Bosworth): What recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on co-ordinating a UK-wide response to the covid-19 outbreak. [908684]</p> <p>Michael Gove (The Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office): We have extensive discussions across Cabinet and with representatives from the devolved Administrations as we co-ordinate an appropriate UK-wide response to the covid-19 outbreak. Only yesterday afternoon I was discussing with the First Minister and Deputy First Minister</p> |

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| | | | <p>of Northern Ireland and the First Ministers of Scotland and Wales how we can ensure that we can co-ordinate effectively the roll-out of mass testing.</p> <p>Dr Evans [v]: I am grateful to the Secretary of State for his answer. Building on that answer, what steps is he taking to ensure that, as the guidance and lockdown measures change, the public are fully informed about what is expected of them across the UK?</p> <p>Michael Gove: My hon. Friend makes a vital point. Of course, devolved Administrations have the right and responsibility to tailor solutions to their geography and their populations, but unity of communication is important. That is why, in the call we had yesterday, we also talked about the vital importance of having an aligned approach towards relaxation of restrictions for the Christmas period so that people can be with friends and family across the United Kingdom, confident that they are following rules that have been agreed by all.</p> |
| 23/11/20 | Press release | LGA | <p>Adequacy of funding for local authorities during the COVID-19 outbreak, House of Commons, 24 November 2020</p> <p>Taking into account the grant support received so far, and assuming that the income guarantee scheme parameters will compensate councils for around £1 billion of lost non-tax income, the Institute for Fiscal Studies estimate there is still an unfunded overall pressure of £1.1 billion in 2020/21 that councils will be forced to absorb unless further funding is announced.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 24/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>Covid-19: Winter Plan Vol 684</p> <p>(a) Johnson, Boris (The Prime Minister): With permission, Mr Speaker, I will make a statement on the Government's covid winter plan.</p> <p>For the first time since this wretched virus took hold, we can see a route out of the pandemic. The breakthroughs in treatment, testing and vaccines mean that the scientific cavalry is now in sight, and we know in our hearts that next year we will</p> |

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| | | | succeed. By the spring, these advances should reduce the need for the restrictions we have endured in 2020 and make the whole concept of a covid lockdown redundant. Full debate here. |
| 24/11/20 | Press release | BEIS | Post-pandemic economic growth: Levelling up - local and regional structures and the delivery of economic growth Read evidence here. |

Energy projects – local authority

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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Environment – 25 year environment plan/Bill

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 3/11/20 | Oral Answer | HoL | <p>Terrestrial and Freshwater Protected Sites - Hansard</p> <p>Lord Teverson: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, published on 11 January 2018, what plans they have to bring forward the 2042 target date for the restoration of 75 per cent of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to a favourable condition.</p> <p>Lord Teverson (LD): My Lords, in declaring my interest as chair of the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Nature Partnership, I ask the Question standing in my name on the Order Paper.</p> <p>Lord Goldsmith Of Richmond Park (The Minister of State, Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office): My Lords, the Environment Bill requires us to set at least one target in each of the four priority areas, including biodiversity. We will bring these targets forward by 31 October 2022. Our recent policy paper, Environment Bill — Environmental Targets, outlines our initial thinking on objectives for targets, which we will develop over the coming months, including on the condition of protected sites. Before committing to specific targets,</p> |

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| | | | <p>we will gather further evidence, including by carrying out a public consultation.</p> <p>Full answer here.</p> |
| 3/11/20 | Press Release | DEFRA | <p>Environment Bill resumes passage through Parliament</p> <p>The government's landmark legislation to transform our environment has returned to Parliament today (Tuesday, 3 November) after a pause due to the coronavirus outbreak.</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 4/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>Environment Bill (Eighth sitting)</p> <p>The Chair</p> <p>May I start by welcoming the Committee back to the interrupted consideration of the Environment Bill and give you a few little parish notices? First, I start from the position of being a very traditional chairman. Chairmen come in different shapes and sizes, and I am at the traditional end of things and, therefore, try to use the procedures and practices we have in the main Chamber, although there may be some variations.</p> <p>Secondly, we should be extremely careful about social distancing. The idea is to sit at the chairs with a blue tick, so the central row is not used, by and large. I think that is a matter for Members' discretion, but perhaps people can make a point of keeping their distance throughout the process of the Bill. On social distancing, instead of passing notes to Hansard, which we would normally do, would Members kindly send by email any speeches they might make. I know that the Hansard Reporters would appreciate that.</p> <p>Most members of the Committee are very experienced, but for those who might not be that experienced, the principle of what we are doing is that, having agreed the principle behind the Bill on Second Reading, we now consider the detail of the wording of the Bill, to make it a good Bill, no matter what we thought of the principle behind it. We can do that by considering the Bill line by line. The means by which that happens is that members of the Committee, whether Opposition or Government—or indeed people who are not members of the Committee, by means that I will describe in a moment—put down</p> |

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| | | | <p>amendments to the Bill. Those amendments are then grouped for debate in a convenient way, bringing together topics that are similar.</p> <p>Only members of the Committee may argue for amendments. However, hon. Members who are not members of the Committee may lay amendments if they can persuade a member of the Committee to move them, and I think one or two examples of that may occur during the Bill. Amendments must be laid by the rise of the House on Thursday for discussion on Tuesday and by the rise of the House on Monday for discussion on the Thursday. That is all I have to say by way of introductory remarks.</p> <p>Full debate here.</p> |
| 5/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>Environment Bill (Ninth sitting)</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 6/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>Environment Bill (Tenth sitting)</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 10/11/20 | Amendments | HoC | <p>Environment Bill 2019-21: Notice of Amendments</p> <p>House of Commons has published a Notice of Amendments for the Environment Bill, which can be accessed here:</p> <p>https://bit.ly/3n9bbFx</p> |
| 11/11/20 | Press Release | DEFRA | <p>Government sets out world-leading new measures to protect rainforests</p> <p>The UK will go further than ever before to clamp down on illegal deforestation and protect rainforests, the government has confirmed today, thanks to world-leading new laws being introduced through the landmark Environment Bill (11 November). The move coincides with the publication of a new report setting out government's approach to tackling deforestation linked to UK demand for products such as cocoa, rubber, soya, and palm oil. The report responds to the recommendations from the independent Global Resource Initiative Taskforce, which consulted over 200 leading businesses and organisations.</p> <p>More here...</p> |

Environment – Air quality

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 3/11/20 | Press Release | DEFRA | <p>Government consults on use of fertilisers to clean up our air</p> <p>The government has launched a consultation today (3 November) seeking views on reducing ammonia emissions from solid urea fertilisers used for growing plants and crops. Read here.</p> |
| 4/11/20 | Debate | DEFRA | <p>Air Quality – committee summary</p> <p>The session was the final one in the committee's updated inquiry into air quality. It focused on the thoughts of local leaders about the impact of air pollution and the economic impact of Covid-19 and its effects on air pollution. It also looked at Clean Air Zones and local initiatives to tackle health inequalities, active travel and the importance of local and national leadership. Full details here.</p> |
| 6/11/20 | Written Q&A | DEFRA | <p>Tree Planting UIN 107737</p> <p>To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether he plans to include targets for tree (a) planting and (b) preservation in relation to (i) planning and (ii) building requirements in his forthcoming...</p> <p>Answer</p> <p>We committed in our manifesto to increase tree planting across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by 2025. As noted in a public paper this summer, we are exploring whether a statutory target for trees in England would be appropriate, under the target setting process proposed by the Environment Bill.</p> <p>To increase planting in England, we recently consulted on proposals for a new ambitious England Tree Strategy, which will be published in spring 2021. This will set out our long-term vision for trees in England and the policy priorities needed to achieve this, as well as plans for how the £640 million Nature for Climate Fund will support the substantial increase in woodland creation that we have committed to achieving in this Parliament.</p> |

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| 9/11/20 | Written Q&A | DEFRA | <p>Air Pollution: Motor Vehicles UIN 109649</p> <p>Ruth Jones (Newport West): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what recent discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the level of air pollution from motor vehicles since covid-19 lockdown restrictions were eased in August 2020. [109649]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): NO2 levels have risen again following the initial period of lockdown as traffic levels increased. We continue taking urgent action to curb the impact air pollution has on communities across England through our ambitious Clean Air Strategy and our £3.8 billion plan to clean up transport and tackle NO2 pollution. The Government continues to engage with local authorities to help them deliver interventions such as Clean Air Zones. Our landmark Environment Bill will enable greater local action for tackling air pollution and deliver key parts of the Clean Air Strategy by establishing a duty to set a target on PM2.5 alongside a further long-term target on air quality as part of the wider framework for setting legally binding environmental targets.</p> <p>Air quality is a devolved matter. Each of the devolved administrations has or is currently developing a strategy which, like the Clean Air Strategy in England, will provide a robust framework to contribute delivery of UK national emission ceilings.</p> |
| 11/11/20 | Press Release | DEFRA | <p>Consultation outcome: Forests: reducing deforestation in UK supply chains</p> <p>The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs has published the outcome of its consultation on a new law to prevent illegal deforestation.</p> <p>Detail of outcome</p> <p>We received 63,719 responses to this consultation. Over 99% of the responses were supportive of the government introducing legislation to reduce deforestation.</p> <p>Based on this consultation and the recommendations of the Global Resource Initiative, an independent taskforce, the government will introduce a new law through the Environment Bill to</p> |

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| | | | <p>prevent illegal deforestation in the supply chains of UK businesses. The new law will also require that companies can demonstrate that they know where the commodities they use have come from and comply with local laws.</p> <p>This report summarises the responses we received and outlines what the government plans to do next.</p> <p>The full outcome can be accessed here: https://bit.ly/3lndnJb</p> |
| 17/11/20 | Committee summary | DEFRA | <p>Air quality - summary Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee Air Quality 16th November 2020 Witnesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebecca Pow MP, DfT Minister, Defra • Rachel Maclean MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department for Transport • Bill Parish, Deputy Director for Air Quality and Industrial Emissions, Defra • Andrew Jackson, Deputy Director of the Joint Defra and Department for Transport Air Quality Unit <p>Overview</p> <p>This session was part of the Committee's inquiry into air quality, focusing on cooperation with local authorities on improving air quality locally, 'clean' alternatives to public transport, cross-department work and funding.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 27/11/20 | Oral answer | HoC | <p>Air Pollution from Motor Vehicles Vol 684</p> <p>Dr Rupa Huq (Ealing Central and Acton) (Lab) What discussions he has had with Cabinet colleagues on the effect of the easing of covid-19 lockdown restrictions in August 2020 on the level of air pollution from motor vehicles. (909302) (Rebecca Pow)</p> <p>Average roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations remain below levels observed in the previous three years, despite some increases as the March lockdown measures were eased. Working closely</p> <p>Toggle showing location of Column 967 with Ministers in the Department for Transport, we continue to drive forward our ambitious plans to improve air quality, and we are delivering our clean air strategy and working in partnership with local</p> |

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| | | <p>authorities to deliver measures to tackle nitrogen dioxide pollution. The Environment Bill will enable greater local action to tackle air pollution.</p> <p>Dr Huq As we hopefully exit a respiratory pandemic, technology grants for home-working, public transport vouchers and the cutting of staff parking permits could all be part of a joined-up strategy for employers to make driving into the office a thing of the past in the new normal, or at least radically reduced, with things such as vehicle scrappage, all-electric fleets and a proper charging network for those who cannot avoid driving. Will the Government adopt a proper, joined-up, cross-governmental strategy, rather than the piecemeal, far-off future targets that they have now?</p> <p>Rebecca Pow The hon. Lady gives some examples, but she is somewhat aggressive in her approach, in that I work so closely with the Department for Transport and the Department of Health and Social Care so that we do have a joined-up approach on air quality, and our clean air strategy goes right across all Departments. Some £1.2 billion from the Department for Transport is being devoted to cycling and walking investment, and the bike vouchers literally went like hot cakes in the summer. We do work closely together. The hon. Lady raises some important points, and we are looking into all the options because we know that times are changing and work patterns are changing.</p> <p>Ruth Jones (Newport West) (Lab) We are one United Kingdom, so I know that the Minister will have paid keen attention to the work happening, albeit devolved, in other parts of the country to tackle toxic air quality and pollution. Will the Minister confirm that she has read the Welsh Government 's clean air plan and share with the House some of the tips she has picked up?</p> <p>Rebecca Pow I thank the hon. Lady for bringing Wales into the discussion, but of course air quality is a devolved matter—she serves on the Environment Bill Committee, in which we have said so many times that it is a devolved matter. I hope that she and</p> |
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| | | | <p>the Welsh Ministers have read our clean air strategy, because it is considered a global leader, but I am always open to ideas. If we can pick up tips from other places, I am all for it.</p> |
| 27/11/20 | Oral answer | HoC | <p>Poor Air Quality: BAME Communities (909304)</p> <p>Fleur Anderson (Putney) (Lab): What assessment his Department has made of the extent to which poor air quality may disproportionately affect BAME communities.</p> <p>The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (George Eustice): Air pollution can be harmful to everyone; however, some people are more affected than others. My Department has commissioned research into inequalities of exposure to air pollution, and monitors emerging evidence investigating air-quality impacts on BAME communities. That research has shown that those BAME groups are disproportionately affected by poor air quality, partly because larger numbers of BAME people live in urban areas where air pollution tends to be worse.</p> <p>Fleur Anderson: I am the MP for one of those urban areas where black and ethnic minority constituents are disproportionately affected by both covid-19 and air quality. Has the Secretary of State held recent discussions with his colleagues in the Department of Health and Social Care? Will he make a statement about specific actions that will be taken on this issue?</p> <p>George Eustice: Of course we talk with our colleagues in the Department of Health and Social Care, the Department for Transport and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on all matters relating to air quality in some urban areas. We intend to take action through the Environment Bill by setting new targets on air quality. One of the targets that we are investigating relates to the impact on particular populations in particular areas.</p> |

Environment – climate change & net zero

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 29/10/20 | Oral Answers | HoL | <p>Clean Growth Fund Volume 807</p> <p>Asked by Baroness Benjamin</p> <p>To ask Her Majesty's Government how much money has been given out from the Clean Growth Fund; and to which projects such money has been given.</p> <p>Baroness Benjamin (LD)</p> <p>My Lords, I beg leave to ask the Question standing in my name on the Order Paper and I declare an interest as a member of the Peers for the Planet group.</p> <p>The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (Lord Callanan) (Con)</p> <p>My Lords, the £40 million Clean Growth Fund was launched in May 2020 as a commercially run venture capital fund managed by Clean Growth Investment Management. The fund manager has had over 400 expressions of interest from SMEs and intends to make several investments in UK companies this financial year. The Clean Growth Fund will develop a broad portfolio of companies investing in software and hardware across the power, transport, industry, buildings and waste sectors. Full answer here.</p> |
| 29/10/20 | Press Release | FSB | <p>The Financial Stability Board (FSB) welcomed the publication today of the 2020 status report by the industry-led Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), which reports on the further growth in TCFD-aligned disclosures by firms.</p> <p>The full report can be accessed here: https://bit.ly/3mxUeo6</p> <p>Full press release here.</p> |
| 29/10/20 | Press Release | Network Rail | <p>Network Rail sets world-first targets to combat global warming</p> <p>Network Rail has announced a major step forward in tackling climate change by becoming the first railway company in the</p> |

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| | | | <p>world to set the most ambitious Science-Based Targets to limit global warming.</p> <p>The targets – and the plans to achieve them – have been independently verified today (29 October), meaning the company will be the first railway to commit to cutting emissions which limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius – below the 2 degrees scientists declared necessary to meet the Paris Agreement. More here...</p> |
| 29/10/20 | Press Release | Climate Change Committee | <p>Evidence-led climate policy and robust climate governance are key to delivering the Paris Agreement</p> <p>By Professor Corinne Le Quéré, CCC Committee Member</p> <p>It's now just twelve months until the UN COP26 climate summit kicks off in Glasgow. Ahead of that pivotal conference global momentum is building for a renewed sense of urgency to address climate change. Governments and organisations around the world are now making ambitious commitments to reach Net Zero emissions – with China, Japan and South Korea the most recent high-profile examples. These are welcome pledges, and they have the potential to become turning points in the race to avoid catastrophic global warming. But they are still just that: pledges. To be realised they must be backed up by concerted, tangible action over the coming decades, which requires effective climate policies backed by robust governance.</p> <p>More here...</p> |
| 2/11/20 | Press Release | The Entrepreneurs Network | <p>Unleash entrepreneurship to tackle eco-challenges</p> <p>New research from The Entrepreneurs Network, in partnership with The Enterprise Trust, finds the majority of entrepreneurs believe the shift to a greener economy represents an opportunity for business and a boost for the economy.</p> <p>The full report can be accessed here: https://bit.ly/2TLQ3Za</p> <p>Full press release here.</p> |
| 3/11/20 | Press Release | UK Space Agency | <p>Climate change space project awarded to Airbus UK</p> <p>Airbus has been awarded a contract to prepare a mission to collect the most accurate measurements of energy coming into the Earth from the Sun, and light reflected off Earth's surface, to help understand changes in balance (global</p> |

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| | | | <p>warming) and mankind's impact on the planet.</p> <p>The mission will not only make measurements itself, but also improve the performance of other missions through calibration from space, becoming a new 'gold standard' reference for climate measurements.</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 6/11/20 | Press release | CCC | <p>CCC welcomes independent report on climate change and health</p> <p>The Climate Change Committee (CCC) today welcomes a new independent report on climate change and health commissioned as part of its work to advise Government on the level of the UK's Sixth Carbon Budget.</p> <p>The report can be accessed here: https://bit.ly/3n1LGps</p> <p>Full press release here.</p> |
| 9/11/20 | Press Release | EAC | <p>Tidal energy and its role in the UK's low-carbon energy mix</p> <p>Could the tide turn for tidal energy in the UK's path to net-zero?</p> <p>In the latest phase of the Technological Innovations and Climate Change inquiry, the Environmental Audit Committee (EAC) will consider the role of tidal energy in the UK's low-carbon energy mix.</p> <p>As the country with the largest marine renewable resources in Europe, and the second highest tidal range in the world, there is significant potential for tidal power generation in the UK. Tidal schemes could also offer a predictable and reliable energy source, providing benefits over other sources of renewable generation such as wind or solar.</p> <p>However, the technology is at the early stages of development so has not been rolled out despite 80% of the UK public supporting tidal and wave deployment. The Government has undertaken numerous reviews into the potential for tidal range. When examining the possibility of a tidal lagoon fleet in 2017, the Government stated the tidal capital cost per unit of annual power output is higher than other energy sources.</p> |

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| | | | <p>The EAC will be examining these issues and more, considering whether tidal power could play a role in the UK's commitment to be net-zero by 2050.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 10/11/20 | Oral answers | HoL | <p>Carbon Emissions - Hansard</p> <p>Baroness Blackstone: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcement by the Prime Minister on 6 October that all homes will be powered through offshore wind by 2030, what plans they have to align their skills strategy with their target for net zero carbon emissions by 2050</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 11/11/20 | Speech | BEIS | <p>BEIS: Speech by Business Secretary, Alok Sharma, at the Green Horizon Summit (10 November 2020)</p> <p>Full speech here.</p> |
| 16/11/20 | Written Q&A | Treasury | <p>Business: Coronavirus</p> <p>Alex Sobel (Leeds North West): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Department will take steps to ensure that businesses sign contractual commitments to help deliver the Government's target of net zero emissions by 2050 when disbursing loans to support businesses during the covid-19 outbreak. [91922]</p> <p>Kemi Badenoch (Saffron Walden):The Government's unprecedented package of support in response to Covid-19 has been targeted at the businesses and individuals who most need assistance, while ensuring that the measures are simple, certain and introduced in a timely manner to protect livelihoods.</p> <p>Alongside the focus on supporting the economy, the Government continues to take its environmental responsibilities very seriously. Companies receiving support as a Last Resort Business Intervention will need to agree to appropriate conditions, including those on climate where we expect companies to commit to ambitious conditions on Net Zero targets. The first company to receive any such support committed to ambitious conditions around climate change and Net Zero targets.</p> |

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| 17/11/20 | Press release | BEIS | <p>UK appoints champion to spur business on to net zero emissions</p> <p>The Prime Minister has appointed Andrew Griffith MP as the UK's Net Zero Business Champion to support the country's business community to make credible plans to net zero by 2050 or earlier and showcase the UK's place as a global leader in tackling climate change.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 17/11/20 | Committee summary | Treasury | <p>Decarbonisation and Green Finance Treasury Committee</p> <p>Witnesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Glen MP, Economic Secretary, HM Treasury • Kemi Badenoch MP, Exchequer Secretary, HM Treasury • Niva Thiruchelvam, Deputy Director, Head of Net Zero Review, Enterprise and Growth Unit, HM Treasury • Richard Knox, Director, Financial Services Group, HM Treasury <p>Overview</p> <p>The Treasury Committee heard evidence from the Government on its decarbonisation and green finance strategies, and scrutinised the work of the Treasury undertaken in implementing those strategies.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 18/11/20 | Debate | HoC | <p>SMEs and the Net Zero Target (Vol 684)</p> <p>Kevin Hollinrake (Con, Thirsk and Malton) opened a Westminster Hall debate to consider support for SMEs and the net zero target.</p> <p>He noted businesses across his own constituency that he worried they would be left behind in the move to net zero, for example the York Handmade Brick company. He explained that banks may view loans to such companies that need to make investments to reduce their carbon as unsustainable and therefore not lend.</p> <p>He continued that this was not just about SMEs: " bigger companies will remember that last year, for example, there were some protests by actors from the Royal Shakespeare Company regarding BP 's sponsorship of that organisation, which led to a parting of the ways between the RSC and its sponsor. That is despite the fact that BP is working within our overall regulatory framework, and will be incredibly important</p> |

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| | | | <p>in the future in making the investment we need to move from a dependence on fossil fuels to a greater dependence on renewable energy. "</p> <p>He stated his key message was that " any intervention by the Government and our financiers, who are so critical to the UK economy, must be comprehensive, well considered, strategic and stable."</p> <p>Full debate here.</p> |
| 18/11/20 | Press Release | PMs office | <p>PM outlines his Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution for 250,000 jobs</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 18/11/20 | Press release | RIC | <p>Time to Retrofit: Decarbonising UK buildings and economic recovery</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 18/11/20 | Press release | DEFRA | <p>£80 million fund for green jobs and new national parks to kick start green recovery</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 19/11/20 | Press Release | LGA | <p>LGA responds to 10-point plan for a "green industrial revolution"</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 19/11/20 | Press release | CCN | <p>Government unveils its ten-point climate change plan: CCN response</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 24/11/20 | Press release | UKGBC | <p>New interactive map shows local authorities leading the way on home retrofit</p> <p>As part of the Accelerator Cities programme funded by EIT Climate-KIC, the UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) has today launched an interactive map designed to showcase leading local authority policies and programmes which address domestic energy efficiency</p> <p>Read here.</p> |

Environment – Waste

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 11/11/20 | Oral answer | HoL | <p>Waste Prevention Programme – Hansard Volume 807</p> <p>Baroness Parminter: To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to publish their revised Waste Prevention Programme for England.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Lord Goldsmith Of Richmond Park (The Minister of State, Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office): My Lords, we published our review of the waste prevention programme 2013 this summer and hope to publish our revised draft waste prevention programme for consultation in the next few months. It will build on our resources and waste strategy, published in 2018, which sets out our plans to move away from the inefficient linear economic model of “take, make, use, throw” to a more circular economy.</p> <p>Full answer here.</p> |
| 19/11/20 | Written Q&A | DEFRA | <p>Recycling UIN 115748</p> <p>Catherine West (Hornsey and Wood Green): To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of adopting a target of 70 per cent recycling by 2030. [115748]</p> <p>Rebecca Pow (Taunton Deane): The Government has not recently assessed the potential merits of adopting a 70% recycling target for 2030. In 2019 we consulted on proposals to improve recycling for households and businesses and published an impact assessment alongside this which set out the benefits of achieving a 65% recycling rate by 2035. This impact assessment concluded that our proposals to ensure a consistent set of materials were collected for recycling from households and non-domestic premises together with other proposals to reform producer responsibility for recycling of packaging and to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks containers would achieve a 65% recycling rate by 2035. The Environment Bill sets out the powers and duties necessary to achieve 65% recycling rate by 2035. We will consult on more detailed provisions and an updated impact assessment in 2021.</p> |
| 20/11/20 | Press release | BEIS | <p>£61 million boost for Europe's largest 'flying lab' to tackle climate change from the skies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £61 million government cash injection to support UK scientists on the largest flying lab in Europe to |

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| | | | <p>tackle pressing environmental challenges</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • funding helps scientists uncover the causes behind rising methane in the Arctic, understand the effect of biomass burning on our climate and monitor volcanic gases for warning signs of a potential eruption • high altitude research enables businesses and researchers to drive innovative green solutions on the ground, helping the UK build back greener <p>Read here.</p> |
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Industrial strategy & local industrial strategies

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 30/10/20 | Press release | Solar Trade Association | <p>Coalition of UK Industries Calls for Renewables Tax Reform</p> <p>A coalition of trade associations representing major British industries including retail, property, construction and technology, has written to the Chancellor to ask that renewable energy technologies such as solar PV and battery storage be exempted from business rates to boost commercial deployment and provide much needed green jobs.</p> <p>The full correspondence can be accessed here: https://bit.ly/3oJhd1s More here...</p> |
| 11/11/20 | Oral answer | BEIS | <p>Marine Renewable Energy</p> <p>Ruth Jones (Lab) (Newport West): What steps he is taking to support the development of marine renewable energy. [908539]</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng (The Minister for Business, Energy and Clean Growth): On 6 October, the Prime Minister announced new plans to build back greener, which included boosting the Government's previous offshore wind target from 30 gigawatts to 40 gigawatts. The hon. Lady will also be interested to hear that the Marine Energy Council is looking at funding models for early tidal projects, and that is something in which the Government are very interested.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Ruth Jones: UK maritime energy is seeing seismic changes, as is so much of the economy in all parts of the nation. Workers skilled in vessels and rigs offshore are being moved to new renewable industries, but—as is always the case with this Government—some are being left behind. This Government cannot be allowed to make the same mistakes that they made in the 1980s, when they left coal workers and entire communities devastated and unsupported. Will the Minister tell the people of Newport West how the Government plan to avoid those mistakes in the new energy transition?</p> <p>Kwasi Kwarteng: The hon. Lady will be aware that the green jobs element of the transition is at the centre of the Government's net-zero strategy, and we fully intend to have something like 2 million green jobs by 2030, although now we have only 460,000. Green jobs are at the centre of the recovery that we are trying to drive.</p> |
| 11/11/10 | Press Release | NIA | <p>Nuclear will create UK jobs in a boost to green economic recovery</p> <p>The UK SMR consortium, led by Rolls-Royce, has announced it expects to create 6,000 regional UK jobs within the next five years, if the UK Government makes a clear commitment that enables a fleet of 16 small modular reactor (SMR) power stations to be built over the next 20 years.</p> <p>The power stations will help secure the UK's net zero commitments affordably, revitalise the UK's regional industrial base and position the UK to secure exports of at least £250 billion.</p> <p>Up to 80% (by value) of the power station components will be made in factories in the Midlands and North of England, before being transported to existing nuclear sites around the country for rapid assembly inside weatherproof canopies.</p> <p>As well as a further 34,000 long-term jobs by the mid-2030s, mostly high value manufacturing roles, the power stations will also provide low carbon energy to</p> |

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| | | | <p>produce net zero synthetic aviation fuels and hydrogen, supporting the UK Government's Jet Zero ambition and the wider decarbonisation of transport.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 11/11/10 | Written Q&A | Treasury | <p>Free Zones: Non-domestic Rates</p> <p>Stephen Flynn (Aberdeen South): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment the Government has made of the potential effect of free ports on business rates receipts for local authorities. [110903]</p> <p>Steve Barclay (North East Cambridgeshire): The UK Government plans to establish Freeports across the UK as soon as possible. These will be national hubs for trade, innovation and commerce, regenerating communities across the UK. Freeports will spread jobs, investment and opportunity to towns and cities up and down the country by unleashing the economic potential of our ports.</p> <p>In the UK Government's recently published consultation response, we outlined that that the UK government is evaluating options for local authorities to retain business rates as part of the Freeports programme. This would apply in England only, or where decisions are not devolved. Further details will be included in the Bidding Prospectus, which will be published in due course.</p> <p>Where policies are devolved, as in Scotland, the implementation and design of Freeports, including any infrastructure funding, will be a matter for each devolved administration to decide upon - although the UK Government will provide any assistance necessary if requested. The UK Government continues to work collaboratively and openly with the devolved administration in Scotland to deliver at least one Freeport in Scotland as soon as possible</p> |
| 23/11/20 | Press release | CBI | <p>A reformed business rates system could play key role in powering a green industrial revolution</p> <p>A reformed business rates system could play key role in powering a green industrial revolution - CBI /Avison Young</p> |

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| | | | Exempt green technologies and energy efficient investments from the business rates bill to help UK build back better, says new report by the CBI and Avison Young. Read here. |
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Local government funding

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 29/10/20 | Press Release | Institute for Fiscal Studies | Extra funding will help English councils this year, but big questions remain for 2021 and beyond. More here... |
| 2/11/20 | Written Q&A | BEIS | <p>Local Restrictions Support Grant UIN 107659</p> <p>To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, how much funding under the Local Restrictions Support Grant scheme has been provided to each local authority in a tier 3 local covid alert level area.</p> <p>Answered on 2 November 2020</p> <p>The Local Restrictions Support Grant (LRSG) announced on 9 September provides support to businesses affected by localised restrictions to control Covid-19. Eligible businesses in very high local Covid alert level areas will receive grants of up to £3,000 per month.</p> <p>We are working with impacted local authorities to ensure they receive the enhanced business support they need, and that support goes to as many businesses in scope of the LRSG scheme as possible. In Bolton, for example, we have worked closely with the Council to best calculate the amount of funding required, using business rates data and local business information.</p> |
| 13/11/20 | Press release | BEIS | <p>Businesses in England to receive £2.2 billion to see them through national restrictions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grants of £2.2 billion to be distributed to businesses across England by councils • support aimed at businesses that have been required to close restrictions, with local authorities given extra cash to help other businesses at their discretion • package builds on £200 billion already provided to support jobs, |

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| | | | <p>incomes and businesses since the start of the pandemic</p> <p>Small businesses in England will receive a significant £2.2 billion from the government to help them through the current period of national restrictions. Businesses will benefit from 2 grant schemes: one for businesses that have had to close, and another scheme for further business support as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, helping support people's jobs and livelihoods and protect communities.</p> <p>Money is being transferred to councils in England today (13 November) and businesses can expect to receive money covering the 4-week period of national restrictions in the coming days and should check their council's website for details.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 13/11/20 | Committee Summary | MCHLG | <p>The Spending Review and Local Government Finance - Summary</p> <p>Overview: This one-off session looked at local government finance and the spending review. Lots of discussion focused around the extra work councils had carried out throughout the pandemic as well as heavy discussion around funding of local government.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 20/11/20 | Press release | London CoC | <p>Comprehensive Spending Review 2020: safeguarding London's global position</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 24/11/20 | Press release | Grant Thornton LLP | <p>Councils at risk if funding 'rollover' in Spending Review</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 24/11/20 | Press release | Sheffield city region | <p>Mayor and LEP Chair call for levelling up commitment at Spending Review</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 25/11/20 | Speech | Treasury | <p>HMT: Speech by Chancellor Rishi Sunak on The Spending Review 2020 (25 November 2020)</p> <p>The Spending Review 2020 speech as delivered by Chancellor Rishi Sunak</p> |
| 25/11/20 | Press release | LGA | <p>Spending Review 2020: LGA responds to Spending Review</p> <p>Read here.</p> |

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| 25/11/20 | News | Dods | <p>BRIEFING: Spending Review - Announcements and Stakeholder Responses</p> <p>This afternoon the Chancellor delivered his Spending Review for 2021-22. This Dods Monitoring briefing breaks down all the key announcements - sector by sector - as well as stakeholder responses. Download and read full briefing here: https://bit.ly/375nHjZ</p> |
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Planning

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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| 29/10/20 | Press Release | National Association of Local Councils | <p>The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) has advised the government to keep communities at the heart of planning in its response to the latter's Planning For The Future White Paper consultation.</p> <p>The full response can be accessed here: https://bit.ly/37TAN</p> <p>More here...</p> |
| 30/10/20 | Press Release | UK Green Building Council | <p>UKGBC responds to the 'Planning for the Future' White Paper consultation</p> <p>Philip Box, Public Affairs and Policy Officer at the UK Green Building Council, said:</p> <p>"We welcome the direction of the measures presented in the White Paper to promote quality in the built environment, simplify the planning system and improve both accessibility and enforcement. Planning has to date been part of a wider system that has not delivered the standards of development we need in order to effectively tackle the built environment's contributions to climate change and biodiversity decline, or promote social value. More here...</p> |
| 6/11/20 | Speech | MCHLG | <p>MHCLG: Housing Minister Christopher Pincher's speech at the National Housing Federation event 'Smaller Housing Associations Conference and Exhibition' (5 November 2020)</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 9/11/20 | Written Q&A | MCHLG | <p>Carbon Emissions: Local Authorities UIN 109608</p> <p>Alex Sobel (Leeds North West): To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of extending powers</p> |

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| | | | <p>available to local authorities to help deliver the Government's target of net zero emissions by 2050. [109608]</p> <p>Christopher Pincher (Tamworth): All levels of Government have a role to play in meeting our net zero goal, and local authorities are rising to this challenge. In August MHCLG published the Planning for the Future consultation, which aims to ensure the planning system supports our efforts to combat climate change, by ensuring the National Planning Policy Framework targets those areas where a reformed planning system can most effectively address climate change mitigation and adaptation and facilitate environmental improvements.</p> <p>Last month the Government announced plans for a Net Zero Strategy that will set out our vision for transitioning to a net zero economy by 2050, making the most of new growth and employment opportunities across the UK. Councils are well positioned to align local needs, opportunities and resources to deliver strategic interventions at all scales. We are working closely with BEIS on the development of the Net Zero strategy, to ensure it reflects this unique role.</p> <p>We are also working with the Committee on Climate Change, as well as local authorities and other expert organisations to determine what steps can be taken to help local authorities ensure that local delivery matches local ambition.</p> |
| 12/11/20 | Written Q&A | MCHLG | <p>Housing: Construction UIN 113197</p> <p>Stephanie Peacock (Barnsley East): To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if he will reassess the potential merits of making sustainable drainage systems compulsory in new housing developments at risk from flooding. [113197]</p> <p>Christopher Pincher (Tamworth): The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided and directed away from areas at highest risk. If new homes are necessary in a flood risk area, and no suitable sites at lower risk are available, the local authority should ensure that the development will be safe and will not increase flood risk elsewhere, and include</p> |

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| | | | <p>sustainable drainage systems where appropriate.</p> <p>Additionally, developers must comply with the Building Regulations which give priority to sustainable drainage systems in their hierarchy of arrangements for dealing with rainwater draining from roofs and paving giving access to the building.</p> <p>We are reviewing our policy for building in areas at flood risk. This will seek to ensure that communities across the country know that future development will be safe from floods. We will assess whether current protections in the National Planning Policy Framework are enough and consider options for further reform.</p> |
| 24/11/20 | Speech | MCHLG | <p>MHCLG: Speech by Housing Minister, Christopher Pincher MP, at Savills Annual Housing Seminar (23 November 2020)</p> <p>Read full speech here.</p> |
| 25/11/20 | Committee summary | MCHLG | <p>The Future of the Planning System in England - Summary</p> <p>Read here.</p> |

Transport – automated & electric vehicles

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
|---------|---------------|--------------|--|
| 3/11/20 | Press Release | BEIS | <p>£49 million uplift drives automotive industry towards green future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government announces £49 million for projects to create thousands of jobs, save millions of tonnes of CO₂ and lead charge towards a low carbon automotive future zero-emissions buses, retro electric motorcycles, and a scaled-up Scottish battery manufacturing facility are amongst concepts receiving funding investment will strengthen electric vehicle supply chains, pave the way for a UK 'Gigafactory' and drive forward green economic recovery <p>Full press release here.</p> |
| 4/11/20 | Press Release | BEIS | <p>UK Government backs two exciting green Scottish projects</p> <p>UK Government backs two Scottish projects with more than half a million</p> |

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| | | | pounds to drive automotive industry towards green future. Read here. |
| 18/11/20 | Press release | DfT | Government takes historic step towards net-zero with end of sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 Read here. |

Transport – Investment strategy

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
|----------|---------------|------------------|---|
| 9/11/20 | Written Q&A | Treasury | <p>Public Transport: Capital Investment UIN 109167</p> <p>Hilary Benn (Leeds Central): To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will make it his policy to shift capital investment from road building to public transport; and if he will make a statement. [109167]</p> <p>Steve Barclay (North East Cambridgeshire): Investing in public transport is a vital part of delivering this Government's ambitions on levelling up and net zero. The PM committed £5 billion for buses and cycling in February alongside essential improvements to North-South connectivity through HS2, while Budget 2020 committed £4.2 billion for long-term intra-city transport settlements across eight elected Mayors outside London. Altogether this represents an unprecedented investment in local public transport. Further details on investment plans will be set out by the Chancellor through the Spending Review on 25 November.</p> |
| 12/11/20 | Press Release | Highways England | <p>Highways England welcomes green light for major A303 upgrade past Stonehenge Read here.</p> |
| 24/11/20 | Press release | RIA | <p>Rail sector sets '10 reasons to continue to invest in rail' ahead of Spending Review Read here.</p> |

Transport – Sub-national Transport Boards (STBs) – (eg TfN, TfSE)

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
|----------|---------------|--------------|--|
| 16/11/20 | Press release | TfN | <p>Mayor Andy Burnham and TfN Chairman John Cridland to lead TfN Annual Conference</p> <p>Northern civic and business leaders will come together virtually to discuss how the region can 'build back better' at #TfN20 Conference in December</p> <p>Economic recovery and long-term transformation for the North of England will dominate this year's Transport for the North (TfN) Annual Conference, with Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham and TfN Chairman John Cridland the first confirmed speakers.</p> <p>The free #TfN20 event, taking place online on Monday 14 December, will focus on how the region can build back better and greener from the Covid-19 pandemic with the right transport investment.</p> <p>As the Government continues its commitment to "levelling up" the country, Northern civic and business leaders and transport experts will discuss the key challenges and opportunities facing the North – and where investment could and should be accelerated.</p> <p>Across a series of themed discussions, they will look at the Integrated Rail Plan; the Spending Review and Green Book appraisal method; the commitments to funding key infrastructure projects such as Northern Powerhouse Rail and HS2, and how transport investment underpins efforts to "rebuild and transform" the North.</p> <p>They will also cover recent efforts and future ambitions around putting passengers first and decarbonisation, and take a closer look at TfN's Economic Recovery Plan, which could kickstart the creation of thousands of jobs by delivering shovel-ready infrastructure projects.</p> <p>Full details here.</p> |
| 16/11/20 | Written Q&A | DfT | <p>Transport for Greater Manchester and Transport for London: Finance</p> <p>Andrew Gwynne (Denton and Reddish): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, how much funding (a) Transport for London and (b) Transport for Greater Manchester has received from the Government for (i) capital projects and (ii) general operations in each of the last 10 years. [114087]</p> |

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| | | | <p>Rachel Maclean (Redditch): The Department for Transport (DfT) has paid £883,925,106 (£884M) directly to Transport for London over the last 10 years. We have not made any direct payments to Transport for Greater Manchester. DfT makes payments to the Greater Manchester Combined Authority who then pay Transport for Greater Manchester for their required transport needs.</p> |
| 19/11/20 | Press Release | TfN | <p>Northern Powerhouse Rail progresses as initial recommendations made to Gov't</p> <p>Read here.</p> |
| 25/11/20 | Written Q&A | DfT | <p>Railways: North of England UIN 1185 66</p> <p>Mr Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Slough): To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what recent discussions he has had with Transport for the North on the Northern Powerhouse Rail project. [118566]</p> <p>Andrew Stephenson (Pendle): The Secretary of State has had regular discussions with the Chair of Transport for the North, and TfN Board members about Northern Powerhouse Rail, most recently in September. The Secretary of State has regular conversations with Northern Leaders in his role as the Northern Powerhouse Minister. I have also held two roundtables with leaders from each area of the North and Midlands to discuss the Integrated Rail Plan. In the Integrated Rail Plan, the Department will set out how projects, including HS2 and Northern Powerhouse Rail, can be connected strategically to deliver the train services that people need and deserve, as effectively as possible.</p> |

Brexit – BEIS, Defra, MHCLG, & committees

| Date | Type | Organisation | Notes |
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